
FTEALMUN'25

HCC

STUDY GUIDE

UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL

Kerem Kılıç

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1. Letter From the Co-Secretaries General

Distinguished Delegates of FTEALMUN'25,

It is a great honour to welcome you all to FTEALMUN'25. In an age when global challenges affect each of us more profoundly than ever before, this conference represents far more than a gathering of students. It is a space where young voices can question, connect, and take the first steps toward shaping lasting change. The committees and agendas have been crafted with care, each one designed to spark meaningful dialogue, challenge existing perspectives, and inspire innovative solutions to the world's most pressing issues.

The true strength of FTEALMUN'25 lies in its diversity. Bringing together delegates from different backgrounds and viewpoints, this conference is a reminder that progress stems from the exchange of ideas. It is not only about policies or resolutions but about learning from one another, testing convictions, and building a community where every vision is valued. As you take on the role of diplomats, I encourage you to keep your minds open, to lead with patience and empathy, and to embrace the discomfort that often comes with meaningful negotiation.

I hope this experience empowers you to bring your full self into every discussion. Let it be a stepping stone in your journey to becoming thoughtful, forward-looking leaders. Each of you carries a unique perspective, and together you will define the spirit and success of this conference. My team and I are excited to see the passion, creativity, and determination you bring to the table.

On behalf of the entire Secretariat, thank you for joining us in this endeavour. May FTEALMUN'25 not only be remembered for its debates but also for the friendships formed, the lessons learned, and the inspiration that stays with us long after the final session concludes.

Warm regards,
Haktan Efe Özgür, Ela Çakır
Co-Secretaries-General of FTEALMUN'25

2. Letter From the Under Secretary General

Dear Delegates,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to this Historical Crisis Committee. I am a at Sophomore at Bahçelievler Anatolian High School and I am more than glad to be your Academic Assistant throughout the committee.

Over the next four days, I encourage each of you to embrace the excitement of collaboration with the other delegates in a respectful manner. As the old people saying goes « Many hands make light work. » Only through sincere cooperation and mutual respect can we build something truly meaningful in this committee. Wishing you all the very best throughout the conference.

Warm Regards,

Kerem Kılıç

3. Introduction to the Committee

The Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) was a decade long conflict that overthrew the authoritarian rule of Porfirio Díaz and sought to reshape Mexico's political and social structure. It began when Francisco I. Madero called for a national uprising against Díaz, sparking rebellions across the country. The revolution quickly grew into a multi faceted struggle, with leaders such as Emiliano Zapata in the south demanding land reform, Pancho Villa in the north mobilizing peasants and workers, and constitutionalists under Venustiano Carranza pushing for political modernization. The war saw shifting alliances, assassinations, and repeated power struggles as revolutionary factions competed to define Mexico's future.

Beyond the battlefield, the revolution was transformative for Mexican society. It challenged the concentration of land in elite hands, weakened the old Porfirian elite, and laid the foundation for a stronger sense of national identity. The 1917 Constitution, born from the conflict, established progressive principles such as land redistribution, labor rights, and restrictions on foreign ownership. Although violence and instability continued into the 1920s, the revolution fundamentally reshaped Mexico, creating the basis for a modern state and inspiring social and political movements across Latin America.

4. Directive Format

The procedure of the crisis committees are much different than the GA committees.

Firstly, you are not representing a country but representing a character from the date that we will simulate. That means you don't have to use "we" language in these kinds of committees. Crises are the events and updates that the crisis team will give you according to your actions throughout the committee. You will receive lots of them since you will take your next movements according to these crises and updates. One of your aims in the committee will be to solve these crises by taking proper action.

You will take these actions by using your personal or the cabinet's power and write directives instead of the resolution papers, like in the GA committees. Directives are the documents you write to take immediate actions and create short-term solutions, which is the difference between directives and resolution papers. Another aspect of directives differing from resolution papers is that you write multiple directives and write them on your papers via handwriting. Now let's learn what exactly directives are and how to write them.

Directive Types

-Personal Directives: In personal directives, you take actions as yourself by using your own personal powers. Since you will be using your own powers, you should consider what powers does your character have. For example, a character who is a commander can take some military actions, etc.

-Joint Directives: Joint Directives are directives that are written by more than one person. You can separate and write the directive part by part. While writing these directives, it is crucial that you work together in coordination and reach a middle ground about your ideas.

-Information Directives: In information directives, you ask for some data that is not written in the study guide. These types of directives should be short and clear. The Crisis Team will tell you the info you need in the next update if what you ask is necessary and clear. An information directive example:

From: Genovevo de la O

HCC

To: Emiliano Zapata

14.07

I would like to be informed about our troop counts, military bases and the distribution of soldiers to military bases.

-Press Releases: In press releases, you are addressing the people in the country by using the media organs. They are crucial for controlling public opinion, so you should use them wisely. Language skills are crucial in order to write a well-structured and effective press release.

-Top Secret Directives: In top secret directives, you also take actions by using your powers but the difference is that the directive will not be known by anyone in your cabinet. These types of directives are mostly used for assassinating someone in your cabinet or even your chair. You have to give these directives secretly to the admins for them to bring your directives to the crisis team members. Since your chair shouldn't see top secret directives, find a way to give it to the admins. You can give it via hiding it inside your empty water cup, secretly putting it in their pockets, etc.

How to Write a Proper Directive:

- » Always write your character's name and the committee on the directive.
- » You need to write the timestamp on top of your directive that you are sending. The crisis team will evaluate your directives according to timestamps.
- » It is highly suggested to give enough details in your directives for them to be accepted and evaluated. Your directive must answer the "Five Ws and one H" questions (Who, What, Why, Where, When, and How)
- » Your directive's purpose and aim should be clear.
- » You should use accurate information. If you cannot find the information you want on the internet, you can send an info directive about it.
- » While you are writing your directives, do not forget to stay on topic, even if you write a perfectly detailed directive if it's not related to the topic or is unnecessary, the crisis team could reject your directive.
- » Your directives should be realistic. Depending on your committee's topic, the realism of your directives can change.
- » You should not write your directives like writing a story. Using "If, Else Clauses" in your directives will improve the quality of your directives.
- » You should write your directives in readable handwriting for the crisis team members to give your directives fair updates.

WRONG WRITTEN DIRECTIVE EXAMPLE:

FROM: Elaine Kamarck

TO: Related Departments

We are establishing a Video Editing Agency (VEA) under the Internet Agency of the Mexico, as soon as possible. The center place of the Video Editing Agency will be held in Tennessee.

Mistake 1: You cannot write “Related Departments” to “TO:” part. You must specify which department you are writing this directive to.

Mistake 2: There is neither a timestamp nor the name of the cabinet.

Mistake 3: This directive is not detailed enough and does not answer the “Five Ws and One H” questions (Who, What, Why, Where, When, and How). You can see the detailed version of this directive below.

PROPERLY WRITTEN DIRECTIVE EXAMPLE:

FROM: Genovevo de la O *HCC*
TO: Emiliano Zapata *16.21*

We are establishing a Video Editing Agency (VEA) under the Internet Agency of the Mexico, as soon as possible. We will pick 100 professional video editors and pay them monthly 20.000 USD for educating partisans of the Parties who want to learn how to montage a video. If they do not accept the offer we will increase the offer to 35.000 USD, if they do not accept it again those who reject our offer will not work with us. The education will be given saturdays and sundays every week. We will rent 5 schools and use 20 classes for each school. We will pay monthly 10.000 usd for each class we rented. If they do not accept our offer we will offer 15.000 us for each class. If they do not accept our offer we will not work with those schools. In every class, there will be 1 professional video editor and 6 partisans of the democratic party who want to learn how to montage a video. The education will be free for partisans of the democratic party. All of the costs will be paid by the democratic party. The education will be produced until partisans of the democratic party learn how to montage a video.

5 high schools which we will rent if we can agree with the schools:

- 1. Staten Island Technical High School*
- 2. Bronx High School of Science*
- 3. Townsend Harris High School*
- 4. Stuyvesant High School*

5. High School of American Studies at Lehman College

We will try to rent another Mexican school if we cannot agree on the 5 schools written above.

5. Key Actors in the Region

5.1. Ejército Libertador del Sur (Zapatistas)

Ejército Libertador del Sur which is also known as The Liberation Army of South was led by the Zapatistas. The Zapatistas were revolutionary forces active primarily in southern Mexico, especially in the state of Morelos, led by Emiliano Zapata. Their main objective was land reform and the recognition of peasant rights. Zapata advocated for the redistribution of land from large landowners to peasants through the *Plan de Ayala*. The Zapatistas had strong ties to local communities and mostly employed guerrilla warfare tactics. Their struggle centered on social justice and local autonomy. The rural population formed their most significant support base. The Zapatistas often clashed with the central government and other revolutionary factions, striving to maintain their regional control.

5.2. División del Norte (Villistas)

The Villistas were a powerful military force based in northern Mexico under the leadership of Pancho Villa. Villa's army was particularly influential in the state of Chihuahua and was equipped with modern weapons and well organized infantry. Villa was recognized as a pragmatic and bold revolutionary leader who promised broad reforms and supported land redistribution in certain areas. The Villistas were known for their swift movements and aggressive military tactics. They often allied with Carranza's government and other revolutionary groups but also engaged in conflicts with them.

5.3. Carrancistas (Constitutionalist Faction)

Led by Venustiano Carranza, the Constitutionalists represented a more centralized and constitutional approach to the revolution. Carranza and his supporters aimed to assume political authority after Díaz's fall and focused on liberal democratic reforms. They were the primary architects behind the 1917 Constitution, advocating for a strong central government. The Carrancistas frequently clashed with factions like Villa and Zapata, becoming a key party in the internal civil war of the revolution. Their policies

were mainly supported by urban elites, business interests, and high-ranking military officers.

5.4. Obregonistas (Military Modernizers)

The military modernizers, led by Álvaro Obregón, were veteran revolutionaries who gained power, especially after 1915 in alliance with Carranza. Obregón played a critical role in defeating Villa with innovative military tactics and disciplined army organization. This group worked towards modernizing the army, training professional officers, and strengthening central authority. The Obregonistas were key players in institutionalizing the revolution and ensuring the new state's stability, wielding significant influence in both political and military spheres.

5.5. Indigenous Communities and Agrarian Militias

Indigenous people living in rural side of Mexico formed various militias and local groups to defend their autonomy and land rights during the revolution. These communities were sometimes influenced by leaders like Zapata but also acted independently. Their main motivations were resisting land dispossession and protecting their cultural and social rights.

5.6. Clergy, Elites, and Urban Classes

During the revolution, Mexico's urban elites, landowners, businessmen, and the Catholic Church played significant roles. This group generally sought to maintain the status quo and was often distant or opposed to revolutionary movements. However, some supported the liberal aspects of the revolution. The Church, especially in rural areas, aimed to preserve its influence, while economic elites feared that the new order might threaten their interests. These classes were important factors shaping the political balance after the revolution.

6. Historical Background

6.1. The Porfirian Regime (1876–1911)

Porfirio Díaz was a military leader who dominated Mexico for more than thirty years. Rising to power in 1876 after opposing the reelection of President Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, Díaz quickly consolidated control and ushered in an era known as the Porfiriato. His motto, «*Order and Progress*,» reflected his vision of stability through authoritarianism and modernization through foreign capital.

Under Díaz, Mexico experienced a quick economic transformation. Railways expanded from just a few hundred kilometers to over 19,000 kilometers by 1910, linking remote regions to urban centers and foreign markets. Mining, oil extraction, and large scale agriculture flourished, fueled by massive foreign investment, particularly from the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. A new urban elite of industrialists and financiers benefited from these reforms, while Mexico City and other major towns saw modernization projects such as electric lighting, telegraphs, and paved boulevards.

Yet beneath this seeming progress lay deep social inequalities. The Porfirian land policies especially the «Ley de Deslinde y Colonización de Terrenos Baldíos» enabled survey companies and wealthy hacendados to seize vast tracts of the land, often displacing indigenous communities. By 1910, it is estimated that less than 1% of the population owned over 90% of the land, while millions of peasants lived in poverty as indebted laborers on haciendas. In the cities, workers faced long hours, low wages, and virtually no labor protections. The regime suppressed strikes such as the Cananea mine strike of 1906 and the Río Blanco textile strike of 1907 with brutal force, leaving hundreds dead and exposing the regime's reliance on coercion.

Politically, Díaz maintained power through a mixture of patronage, cooptation, and repression. Though he initially presented himself as an opponent of reelection, he remained in power by manipulating elections and removing rivals. Governors, judges, and local officials were appointed for loyalty rather than merit, ensuring central control. Opposition movements, independent newspapers, and critical voices were tightly censored. While Díaz maintained relative peace and order, this stability came at the cost of democracy and social justice.

By the early 20th century, cracks in the Porfirian system had begun to appear. A new middle class of professionals and intellectuals, influenced by liberal and democratic ideals, grew increasingly frustrated with Díaz's iron grip on politics. Meanwhile, rural uprisings simmered among dispossessed peasants, and workers became more organized in their demands for labor

rights. The regime's decision to allow foreign investors overwhelming influence over national resources further fueled nationalist resentment.

In 1910, Díaz announced he would not seek reelection, opening the door to political opposition. However, when he reversed this decision and ran again, the opposition candidate Francisco I. Madero emerged as the voice of democratic reform. Díaz's victory in the fraudulent 1910 election sparked widespread unrest, setting the stage for the revolutionary upheaval that would soon engulf the country.

6.2. The Madero Campaign(1911)

Francisco I. Madero, a wealthy landowner and political reformer, emerged as the leading opposition figure against Porfirio Díaz. His book «La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910» called for free elections, political democracy, and an end to Díaz's prolonged rule.

When the 1910 elections were rigged in Díaz's favor, Madero issued the «Plan of San Luis Potosí» declaring Díaz's presidency illegitimate and calling for Mexicans to rise up on November 20, 1910. Although the initial response was limited, uprisings quickly spread across northern Mexico where leaders such as Francisco Pancho Villa and Pascual Orozco rallied armed groups of peasants and workers.

By early 1911, revolutionary forces had seized important towns, placing enormous pressure on the Díaz regime. The decisive blow came with «the Battle of Ciudad Juárez (May 1911)» where rebel forces defeated federal troops. Facing mounting unrest, Díaz resigned on May 25, 1911, and went into exile in France.

Madero entered Mexico City as a hero, symbolizing the triumph of democracy over dictatorship. However, his moderate reform program focused more on political freedoms than on radical social change, would soon clash with the deeper demands of peasants and revolutionaries, leaving his government vulnerable.

6.3. The Huerta Coup(1913)

The overthrow and murder of Francisco Madero in 1913 fractured the revolutionary movement. What had once been a relatively unified push against the Porfirian dictatorship now splintered into multiple competing factions, each with its own leaders, regional bases, and political

visions. This period was defined by both cooperation against Huerta's dictatorship and growing rivalries that would soon erupt into open conflict.

After seizing power, Victoriano Huerta sought to reestablish a strong centralized regime resembling Porfirio Díaz's. He relied on the military, conservative elites, and foreign capital, especially from European investors and certain US business interests. However, Huerta's repressive tactics and lack of legitimacy quickly galvanized the revolutionaries into renewed armed resistance.

The Constitutional Army, organized under Venustiano Carranza and based in the northern state of Coahuila, emerged as the principal anti-Huerta force. Carranza issued the Plan of Guadalupe, which denounced Huerta as an illegitimate usurper and declared the revolution's aim to restore constitutional order.

Several regional armies rose against Huerta, each with its own leaders and priorities. División del Norte which was Led by Pancho Villa, this force operated mainly in Chihuahua and the north. Villa's military skill and ability to mobilize the rural poor made his army one of the most powerful revolutionary forces. He gained popular support through radical land policies and by redistributing resources to peasants and workers. Ejército Libertador del Sur which was under Emiliano Zapata, based in Morelos, this army pursued the radical agrarian program outlined in the Plan of Ayala. Zapata's movement represented the peasantry's demand for «Tierra y Libertad» (Land and Liberty). Unlike Carranza, Zapata had no interest in central power his goal was deep social transformation in rural Mexico. Obregonistas and Regional Leaders such as, Álvaro Obregón, a skilled general from Sonora, aligned with Carranza's Constitutionalists but gradually emerged as a power in his own right. Other regional leaders also commanded loyalty from local militias, further complicating coordination.

The international dimension further destabilized the situation. While the US Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson had supported Huerta's coup, President Woodrow Wilson, in office from March 1913 refused to recognize Huerta's regime. In April 1914, the US even occupied the port of Veracruz, weakening Huerta and bolstering the Constitutionalists.

At the same time, European powers, especially Britain and Germany, watched closely, as Mexico was rich in oil and other resources. Their involvement tended to favor stability over revolutionary change, which indirectly benefited Huerta.

By mid 1914, Huerta's regime was collapsing under pressure from all sides. Villa's División del Norte swept through northern Mexico, defeating federal forces at Torreón and Zacatecas. These victories were decisive, breaking the backbone of Huerta's army.

On July 15, 1914, Huerta resigned and fled into exile. His downfall marked the victory of the revolutionary forces but instead of unity, his departure unleashed bitter struggles among the victors.

With Huerta gone, the revolutionaries could no longer hide their ideological divisions. Carranza sought to consolidate power under his Constitutionalists, but Villa and Zapata rejected his leadership, insisting on more radical reforms. The uneasy coalition began to fracture, setting the stage for the Convention of Aguascalientes (1914) and the civil wars that followed.

6.4. The Convention of Aguascalientes(1914)

The fall of Victoriano Huerta in July 1914 marked a turning point in the Revolution. With the usurper gone, the revolutionaries were no longer united by a common enemy. Instead, the deep ideological and personal divisions between the major factions began to surface, making the question of Mexico's political and social future more pressing than ever. To address these tensions, the revolutionary leaders convened a national assembly in October 1914 in the city of Aguascalientes. Known as the Convention of Aguascalientes, this gathering represented an ambitious attempt to reconcile conflicting visions and establish a unified government.

At its core, the convention brought together representatives from the three most powerful revolutionary factions. Venustiano Carranza, as leader of the Constitutionalists, sought to maintain his authority as « First Chief » under the « Plan of Guadalupe » and push forward a relatively moderate political reform program. Pancho Villa, backed by his massive División del Norte, favored more radical social changes, particularly land redistribution and greater autonomy for regional military leaders. Emiliano Zapata, though he did not attend personally, sent people from the south to represent the demands of the « Plan of Ayala » which called for sweeping agrarian reform and the return of land to peasant communities. In addition to these groups, smaller contingents from Obregonistas, regional militias, and independent revolutionary leaders also joined the discussions.

The debates at Aguascalientes revealed just how unreconcilable the revolution's factions had become. Carranza insisted on preserving a centralized national government under his leadership, portraying himself as the only figure capable of restoring order after years of war. Villa and Zapata, however, argued that the revolution would be meaningless if it failed to dismantle the hacienda system and redistribute land to Mexico's rural poor. The Zapatistas in particular refused to compromise on agrarian reform, making it clear that constitutional legality without social justice was unacceptable.

The convention ultimately turned into a political confrontation. The people voted to strip Carranza of his authority as « First Chief » and instead recognized Eulalio Gutiérrez as provisional president of Mexico. While this decision reflected the desire to create a neutral, transitional government, it also alienated Carranza, who rejected the legitimacy of the convention and withdrew his forces. At the same time, Villa and Zapata grew closer, seeing in one another allies against Carranza's centralism. Their eventual decision to march together into Mexico City in December 1914 symbolized a dramatic challenge to Carranza's leadership.

Yet, the Convention of Aguascalientes failed to produce lasting unity. Instead of reconciling the revolutionaries, it deepened the divisions. Carranza retreated to Veracruz and consolidated his power with Obregón's support, while Villa and Zapata briefly occupied the capital but proved unable to govern effectively. By early 1915, Mexico was once again descending into civil war this time not against a dictator like Díaz or Huerta, but between the revolutionaries themselves.

The Convention of Aguascalientes stands as a pivotal moment. It is a missed opportunity for compromise, where ideals of democracy and social justice clashed with the ambitions of powerful leaders. Its failure set the stage for the bloody intra revolutionary conflict that would dominate the next phase of the struggle.

6.5. The Civil War Within the Revolution(1915–1917)

The collapse of Victoriano Huerta's dictatorship in 1914 left Mexico without a unifying enemy. What began as a revolution against authoritarianism then transformed into a civil war among the victors themselves. The factions that had once marched under the banner of « revolution » now confronted one another over the future of Mexico. Between 1915 and 1917, this conflict produced some of the bloodiest battles of the revolution and shaped the political landscape for years to come.

6.5.1. The Breakdown of Unity

The Convention of Aguascalientes exposed the deep fissures within the revolutionary coalition. Venustiano Carranza and his Constitutionalists sought to establish a centralized, legalistic government rooted in the Plan of Guadalupe, emphasizing political reform over radical social transformation. By contrast, Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata advocated for sweeping changes. Villa championed local autonomy and regional power, while Zapata, through the Plan of Ayala, insisted on immediate and widespread land redistribution.

Carranza refused to accept the authority of the convention and withdrew his forces to Veracruz, where he consolidated power with the backing of his strongest general, Álvaro Obregón. At that time, División del Norte and Ejército Libertador del Sur formed a tenuous alliance, marching into Mexico City in December 1914. This symbolic occupation represented the height of Villa and Zapata's influence, yet it revealed their inability to govern a fractured nation. While Carranza built a functioning state apparatus in Veracruz, Villa and Zapata remained focused on military campaigns and local reforms, missing the chance to solidify national control.

6.5.2. The Rise of Obregón and the Constitutionalists

The turning point of this civil war came with the emergence of Álvaro Obregón as Carranza's most capable commander. Unlike many revolutionary leaders, Obregón was a skilled strategist who embraced modern warfare, utilising trenches, machine guns, and barbed wire to counter Villa's more traditional cavalry charges. His willingness to adopt European style tactics learned in part from observing the I. World War gave the Constitutionalists a decisive military advantage.

Obregón's brilliance was first demonstrated in April 1915 at the Battle of Celaya, where he inflicted a devastating defeat on División del Norte. Villa's reliance on frontal cavalry assaults proved disastrous against Obregón's entrenched machine gun positions. Over the course of several days, Villa's army suffered massive casualties, losing thousands of men and much of its legendary aura of invincibility. Celaya was not only a military defeat but also a psychological blow that Villa would never fully recover from.

6.5.3. The Collapse of Villa's Power

Following Celaya, Obregón pressed his advantage. Additional battles at León between June and July in 1915 and Aguascalientes in July 1915, further weakened Villa's once mighty forces. By the late of 1915, the División del Norte was reduced from nearly 50K men at its peak to a fraction of that number. Desertion, dwindling supplies, and the loss of US support crippled Villa's ability to continue large scale warfare.

As a response, Villa turned to guerrilla tactics, retreating to his stronghold in Chihuahua. From there, he conducted raids and maintained a regional presence but was no longer a national contender. His eventual attack on Columbus, New Mexico in March 1916 which is a retaliatory raid against US recognition of Carranza's government provoked the infamous Punitive Expedition, in which US General John J. Pershing led thousands of American troops into northern Mexico. Although Pershing failed to capture Villa, the raid further isolated him diplomatically and cemented Carranza's legitimacy in the eyes of the United States.

6.5.4. Zapata's Struggle in the South

While Villa's power declined in the north, Zapata remained entrenched in the southern state of Morelos. His movement continued to implement radical agrarian reforms, redistributing hacienda lands to peasants in line with the Plan of Ayala. Yet Zapata's influence remained largely regional. Unlike Carranza and Obregón, he lacked the resources and national infrastructure to expand his authority beyond the south.

Carranza's forces conducted repeated campaigns against the Zapatistas, but Zapata's guerrilla tactics and support among the rural population allowed his movement to endure. Even so, his isolation meant that he could not challenge Carranza's claim to national leadership. Instead, Zapata became the symbolic conscience of the revolution. He was the unyielding champion of land reform, even as other factions compromised for political power.

6.5.5. Carranza Consolidates Power

By the year of 1916, Carranza stood as the dominant figure in Mexico. Recognized by the United States in October 1915, his government had both international legitimacy and military supremacy, thanks to Obregón's victories. Carranza used this position to call for a Constitutional Convention in Querétaro in 1916, aiming to draft a new framework for Mexico's future.

The convention culminated in the Constitution of 1917, one of the most progressive charters of its time. It included articles that addressed land reform, labor rights, education, and restrictions on the Catholic Church. While many of these provisions were inspired by revolutionary demands particularly those of Zapata and radical reformers, Carranza ensured that the document ultimately reinforced central authority under his leadership.

6.5.6. Outcome of the Civil War Phase

By early 1917, the military balance of the revolution had shifted decisively. Villa's forces were shattered, Zapata was contained, and Carranza had established a functioning national government under a new constitution. However, the civil war had come at a terrible cost. Hundreds of thousands dead, widespread destruction, and a fractured society still grappling with poverty and inequality.

The years 1915–1917 represented the most violent and decisive phase of the revolution. While Carranza emerged victorious, the dream of unity and social justice remained elusive. Villa and Zapata, though diminished, continued to resist, ensuring that the revolution would remain unfinished even after the constitution was proclaimed.

6.6. The 1917 Constitution

The revolutionary struggles of 1910–1917 culminated in the drafting of a new constitution, adopted in Querétaro on February 5, 1917. This document represented the legal foundation of the post revolutionary Mexico and sought to address the demands that had fueled years of conflict.

The constitution was remarkable for its progressive and radical provisions, many of which were far ahead of their time. One of the articles gave the state power over natural resources and allowed for land redistribution, responding to long standing calls for agrarian reform and one other enshrined labor rights, establishing limits on working hours, the right to strike, and protections for workers making Mexico one of the first countries to constitutionally guarantee such rights.

In addition, the constitution placed restrictions on the Catholic Church, reducing its political influence and reaffirming the separation of church and state. It also emphasized national sovereignty, particularly against foreign economic domination, reflecting Mexico's historical struggles with foreign powers.

While Venustiano Carranza ensured the document preserved central authority under his leadership, the constitution was shaped by the revolutionary movements that preceded it. It sought to balance reformist ideals with practical governance, providing a framework that could unite a war torn country under law.

The Constitution of 1917 remains in force today, albeit heavily amended, and stands as one of the most important legacies of the Mexican Revolution.

6.7. The Decline of the Revolutionaries(1918–1920)

By 1918, the revolutionary coalition that had toppled Porfirio Díaz and survived years of civil war was unraveling. The Mexican Revolution had entered a new stage. It was not of dramatic battles between massive armies, but of political maneuvering, assassinations, and the systematic dismantling of the once powerful revolutionary factions.

Venustiano Carranza sought to consolidate his authority and transform himself from revolutionary leader into a stabilizing statesman. Yet his centralizing ambitions clashed with the ideals of other figures who had risen during the revolution. Leaders like Emiliano Zapata

and Pancho Villa, who embodied agrarian and popular demands, were marginalized, hunted, and ultimately eliminated.

The most symbolic blow came with the murder of Emiliano Zapata. In 1919, Carranza's government orchestrated an ambush at Chinameca, Morelos, where Zapata was betrayed and killed. His death represented not only the silencing of the agrarian movement but also the triumph of the central government over rural insurgency. However, Zapata's ideals *Tierra y Libertad* (Land and Liberty) would survive in memory and shape Mexico's future land reform policies.

Meanwhile, División del Norte, once the most feared revolutionary army, had been decisively weakened after defeats in 1915. By the late 1910s, Villa no longer commanded large scale forces. Though he remained a regional power in northern Mexico, his influence was reduced to sporadic raids and limited political bargaining. He was granted amnesty in 1920, living on a hacienda until his assassination in 1923, but by the revolution's end his role was largely symbolic.

Despite eliminating his rivals, Carranza faced new enemies. His rigid centralism and unwillingness to share power alienated many revolutionary generals. Most notably, Álvaro Obregón, Carranza's former ally and brilliant military commander, broke with him. Obregón represented a new generation of leaders who sought to modernize Mexico while still appealing to revolutionary ideals.

In 1920, Carranza attempted to impose a civilian successor of his choosing, Ignacio Bonillas, in order to block Obregón's path to the presidency. This decision sparked widespread discontent among military leaders, many of whom rallied behind Obregón.

Obregón, along with generals Adolfo de la Huerta and Plutarco Elías Calles, launched the « Plan of Agua Prieta » in April 1920. This manifesto rejected Carranza's authority and mobilized military opposition against him. Carranza fled Mexico City, attempting to reach Veracruz, but was betrayed and assassinated in May 1920 at Tlaxcalantongo, Puebla. His death marked the end of the « Constitutionalists » dominance that guided the revolution since 1915.

The collapse of Carranza's regime ushered in the rise of Obregón and his allies, who would dominate Mexican politics for the next decade and eventually institutionalize revolutionary ideals through the formation of political parties and state reforms. Yet, the revolutionary dream of a pluralistic, grassroots driven transformation had largely faded. By 1920, Mexico was moving toward stability, but at the cost of suppressing many of the radical aspirations that had ignited the revolution in 1910.

7. Major Battles in the Revolution

7.1. Battle of Casas Grandes (March 1911)

Madero's revolutionary forces attempted to seize Casas Grandes but were repelled by federal troops. This early failure showed the revolutionaries lack of training but also motivated them to reorganize.

7.2. Battle of Ciudad Juárez (May 1911)

Madero's forces under Orozco and Villa captured the border city after days of street fighting. Federal troops surrendered. The victory directly forced Díaz to resign and flee into exile.

7.3. Battle of Cuautla (May 1911)

Zapata's peasant army fought six days of brutal combat to seize Cuautla. Despite heavy casualties, they prevailed, gaining prestige in the south and proving guerrillas could defeat regular armies.

7.4. Battle of Rellano (March 1912)

Orozco, now rebelling against Madero, used a dynamite laden train « El Tren Dinamitero » to crush federal troops under General Huerta. The federal army retreated in disarray.

7.5. Second Battle of Rellano (May 1912)

Huerta regrouped and decisively defeated Orozco. Orozco's rebellion began to collapse as his troops deserted.

7.6. Battle of Torreón (October 1913)

Villa's División del Norte captured Torreón from Huerta's federal army after bloody fighting. This victory secured Villa's dominance in northern Mexico.

7.7. Battle of Tierra Blanca (November 1913)

Villa, commanding around 9K men, routed 7K federals with cavalry charges and captured artillery. The battle further weakened Huerta's northern defenses.

7.8. Battle of Ojinaga (January 1914)

Villa besieged and captured Ojinaga, forcing 4K federal soldiers and refugees to flee into US territory. This opened the border fully to Villa's operations.

7.9. Battle of San Pedro de las Colonias (April 1914)

Villa's army decisively defeated federal forces, capturing 5,000 prisoners and large amounts of supplies. The victory set the stage for the fall of Huerta.

7.10. Battle of Zacatecas (June 1914)

Villa's 25K troops stormed Zacatecas, defended by 12K federals. The federal army collapsed with over 7,000 killed. The bloodiest single battle of the revolution, it destroyed Huerta's regime.

7.11. Battle of Celaya (April 1915)

Obregón, using trenches, barbed wire, and machine guns, shattered Villa's cavalry charges. Villa lost up to 10K men. It marked the turning point where Constitutional forces eclipsed the Villistas.

7.12. Battle of Trinidad (June 1914)

Carranza's Constitutional forces clashed with Huerta's army. The victory allowed Carranza to push further south and strengthen his claim to leadership.

7.13. Battle of León (June 1915)

Villa attempted to regroup but Obregón again crushed him in a 40 day battle. Villa's army was permanently broken as a major force.

7.14. Battle of Agua Prieta (November 1915)

Villa attacked Agua Prieta, but defenders under Calles had US logistical support. Villa's army suffered huge losses, confirming his decline.

7.15. Battle of Columbus (March 1916)

In retaliation for US support of Carranza, Villa raided Columbus, New Mexico, killing civilians and soldiers. Though a tactical success, it provoked the US Punitive Expedition against him.

7.16. Battle of Parral (April 1916)

The US Punitive Expedition clashed with Mexican civilians and Carranza's forces in Parral. Tensions nearly escalated into war between the US and Mexico.

7.17. Battle of Carrizal (June 1916)

US troops under Pershing fought Carranza's Constitutional forces at Carrizal. The Americans suffered heavy casualties, demonstrating Carranza's independence from US control.

7.18. Battle of Ciudad Juárez (June 1919)

Villa attempted to retake Juárez but was repelled by Mexican defenders and US artillery fire across the border. This ended Villa's hopes of resurgence.

8. Historical Timeline

November 20 1910: Francisco I. Madero issues the Plan of San Luis Potosí, calling for the overthrow of Porfirio Díaz. Revolts begin across northern Mexico, especially in Chihuahua and Coahuila.

December 1910: Early skirmishes in Chihuahua, Durango, and other northern states; Pascual Orozco and Pancho Villa organize local rebel forces. Emiliano Zapata begins mobilizing peasants in Morelos.

May 10: Rebels capture Ciudad Juárez, forcing federal troops to surrender.

May 25: Porfirio Díaz resigns and goes into exile.

June 1911: Zapata consolidates his forces in Morelos but grows dissatisfied with Madero's moderate reforms.

October 1911: Madero inaugurated as President of Mexico.

November 1911: Zapata issues the Plan of Ayala, denouncing Madero and committing to land reform.

March 1912: Pascual Orozco, dissatisfied with Madero, begins a rebellion in Chihuahua against the federal government.

March 24: Orozco wins the First Battle of Rellano using his « Dynamite Train » tactic.

May 1912: Huerta reorganizes federal forces and defeats Orozco at the Second Battle of Rellano, ending his rebellion.

February 9–19: Ten Tragic Days- Armed coup in Mexico City led by Victoriano Huerta and Félix Díaz. Heavy street fighting occurs.

February 22: President Madero and Vice President Pino Suárez are assassinated.

February 22: Huerta assumes the presidency.

March 1913: Venustiano Carranza issues the Plan of Guadalupe, rejecting Huerta's rule and calling for a Constitutionalists' uprising.

April 1913: Rebel forces start consolidating in northern Mexico under Villa and Obregón.

April 21: US troops occupy Veracruz, weakening Huerta's supply lines.

July 15: Huerta resigns and flees Mexico.

October 1914: Convention of Aguascalientes convenes; Villa and Zapata oppose Carranza. Civil war begins between Conventionists and Constitutionalists.

April 1915: Obregón defeats Villa at the Battle of Celaya using trench warfare and barbed wire, marking Villa's decline.

November 1915: Villa's attack on Agua Prieta fails; US support helps Obregón's forces.

1915: Carranza consolidates power as leader of the Constitutionalists.

March 9: Villa raids Columbus, New Mexico, provoking U.S. Punitive Expedition led by General John J. Pershing.

April–June 1916: US troops pursue Villa but fail to capture him; minor clashes occur in northern Mexico.

February 5: Constitution of 1917 is promulgated in Querétaro, including land reform , labor rights , and restrictions on foreign ownership.

1917: Fighting continues in southern Mexico between Zapatistas and Carranza's forces.

April 10, 1919: Emiliano Zapata is assassinated in Chinameca, Morelos by Carranza's forces, ending large-scale southern resistance.

April 1920: Álvaro Obregón launches the Plan of Agua Prieta against Carranza.

May 21, 1920: Carranza is assassinated while fleeing Mexico City. Obregón becomes president, marking the end of the revolutionary decade and beginning of a new political order.

9. Political Situation in November 1910

In November 1910, Mexico stood on the brink of a profound political upheaval. For over 30 years, President Porfirio Díaz had ruled with an iron hand, maintaining a façade of constitutional order while suppressing dissent and manipulating elections. Although Díaz had once promised democratic reforms, his regime became synonymous with authoritarianism, corruption, and favoritism toward wealthy elites and foreign investors. The Porfirian system marginalized peasants, workers, and indigenous communities, while concentrating land and wealth in the hands of a small ruling class. By 1910, frustration had reached a boiling point, and Díaz's decision to secure yet another term in office by fraud only intensified the anger of the opposition.

The opposition was spearheaded by Francisco Madero, a wealthy landowner with liberal convictions who demanded free elections and political democracy. His Plan of San Luis Potosí, issued after escaping Díaz's imprisonment, called on Mexicans to rise in arms beginning in November. Although at first the uprising was scattered and lacked coordination, it gained momentum fast in the north, where revolutionary leaders such as Pascual Orozco and Pancho Villa rallied fighters to their cause. In the south, Emiliano Zapata embraced the movement, framing it around land reform and the defense of peasant communities. The Madero campaign, though initially fragile, gave voice to widespread grievances that Díaz could no longer suppress.

Politically, Mexico was deeply fragmented. Díaz's supporters the científicos and large landowners remained loyal, but even some of his generals and bureaucrats questioned his ability to maintain stability. Middle class reformists, radical peasants, and disaffected regional leaders united under the revolutionary banner, though their aims differed greatly. By November 1910, the country entered a transitional stage. The Porfirian regime still held formal control, but the legitimacy of Díaz's government had collapsed. The uprising had begun, and the balance of power was shifting rapidly toward revolutionary forces that sought to redefine the nation's political order.

10. Bibliography

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